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SENATORS DELAY C.I.A. SHOWDOWN

Compromise Plan Is Sought on Overseeing Agency

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Contending Senate leaders in the quarrel over supervision of the Central Intelligence Agency postponed a showdown today in the hope of reaching a compromise.

Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, had planned to present for floor action a resolution to add three members of his committee to a "watchdog" group now headed by Senator Richard B. Russell, chairman of the Armed Services Committee.

This resolution, sponsored by Senator Eugene J. McCarthy, Democrat of Minnesota, had been approved 14 to 5 by the Foreign Relations Committee on May 17.

Two hours before the Senate convened at noon, however, the majority leader, Mike Mansfield, called Senators Fulbright, Russell, McCarthy and John Stennis of Mississippi to his office.

Afterward, Mr. Mansfield said that the McCarthy resolution would not be brought up this week because "we are still trying to work out a compromise solution in consultation with various interested Senators."

Backed by Mansfield

Mr. Mansfield strongly supports the contention of Senators Fulbright and McCarthy that the activities of the intelligence agency affect foreign policy and that consequently the Foreign Relations Committee should be represented on the group exercising legislative "oversight" of the agency.

Ever since the agency was created in 1947 by the National Security Act, seven Senators from the Armed Services Com-

mittee and the subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee handling the defense budget have constituted the group to which the agency's director has reported. On the House side, the director has reported to two subcommittees of Armed Services and Appropriations committees.

Senator Russell vigorously opposed the McCarthy resolution in a floor speech two weeks ago on the ground that inclusion of Foreign Relations Committee members might result in leaks. So far, he said, "there has never been a security leak" from his subcommittee. He denied that the agency had a role in foreign policy and charged that Mr. Fulbright and his committee were trying to "muscle in" on the armed services committee.

Defeat Was Expected

Mr. Russell, it was agreed, had the votes to defeat the McCarthy resolution. But the prospect was that perhaps 35 Senators might support it. This might be sufficient to cause Mr. Russell some embarrassment and possibly ensure enactment of the resolution if a C.I.A. operation should go awry and arouse criticism.

In any event it seemed today that Senator Russell was amenable to compromise.

Senator Mansfield reported that all of those present at the meeting "had open minds" and "seemed to be not averse to a compromise if one could be worked out."

Senator Stennis, a member of the present watchdog group, said it was "highly important" to avoid a floor fight.

Senator Mansfield suggested two possibilities for compromise.

One, he said, would be the acceptance by Russell's group of two or three members of the Foreign Relations Committee without a resolution.

The other, which Mr. Mansfield said had been discussed, would be the creation of a Foreign Relations subcommittee on the assurance by the White House that the intelligence

agency would report as fully to this group as to Mr. Russell's